COVID-19
Health and Safety
Best Practices
for
Return to Work

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Today’s discussion will be focused on non-healthcare workplaces.

While the prevention strategies discussed are based on the best available science, the effectiveness of these strategies in preventing COVID-19 in the workplace have not been fully evaluated.

The discussion will be focused on national and Colorado guidelines. There may be other guidelines and public health orders in your state or municipality.
A worker infected 533 others with coronavirus at a factory in Ghana, president says

By Bukola Adelabu, CNN
Updated 9:02 AM ET, Mon May 11, 2020

At least 4,500 Tyson workers have caught COVID-19, with 18 deaths. The meat giant still doesn't offer paid sick leave, as the industry blames workers for outbreaks.

Ghana has more than 4,700 confirmed cases of the coronavirus.

(CNN) -- Hundreds of factory workers at a fish processing plant in Ghana have tested positive for the coronavirus, the country’s president Nana Akufo-Addo said.

All 533 of them contracted the virus from one worker at the factory in the port city of Tema, Akufo-Addo said in his public address to the nation Sunday.

The factory infection was detected from a backlog of 831 samples collected for testing last month that health officials just reported, Akufo-Addo said.

He did not give further details about the operations or measures to be taken about the situation.

CNN has reached out to Ghana's health ministry for comment and is awaiting a response.

The mass infection at the facility brings the total number of confirmed cases in the West Africa.
Motivating Example
Coronavirus in Call Center in South Korea*

How does COVID-19 spread?

- Particles expelled through coughing, sneezing, speaking, and exhaling
  - Droplet transmission
  - Close range aerosol transmission
- Contact with contaminated surfaces (fomites)
How long are people “contagious”?

- High levels of viral shedding even at earliest stage of illness (mild to no symptoms)
- Viral shedding appears to decrease after about 5 days in those with mild symptoms
- High levels of viral shedding can continue beyond 10 days in those with severe symptoms
- Can continue to shed low levels of virus for up to six weeks or more
Guiding Principles for Preventing COVID-19

1. Keep people with COVID-19 out of the workplace
2. Keep people at least 6 feet apart in the workplace
3. Use barriers and face coverings when closer than 6 feet
4. Wash hands often
5. Clean and disinfect surfaces often
6. Communicate across all organizational levels
7. Hope for the best, prepare for the worst
Before you do anything else…

- Assign a COVID-19 prevention coordinator to become an expert in state and local guidelines
- Establish a committee with representation from all levels to develop a prevention plan
- Ensure management buy-in to all aspects of the plan
- Communicate clearly and often with employees at all levels regarding the plan and individual expectations
- Consider all aspects of your operation in your plan
Keeping people with COVID-19 out of the workplace

- Paid sick leave and quarantine/isolation leave!
- Training employees on signs and symptoms of infection
- Ensure employees know how and when to call-in sick
- Pre-shift temperature and symptom screening
- Manager/supervisor vigilance in recognizing sick employees
- Have a plan for how to send employees home and procedures for returning to work

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Keeping people apart

- Allow people who can effectively work remotely to continue to work remotely
- Strongly consider remote work accommodations or other options for high risk employees
- Consider 6 feet an absolute minimum distance for extended work (i.e., distance between people at desks)
- Eliminate meetings of more than 10 people
- Space out lunch and break areas
- Implement physical distancing cues in areas of your facility that are prone to crowding such as locker rooms, time clocks, entrances, and exits
- Consider designating “physical distance coaches” to remind people to stay apart and monitor for areas of crowding in the facility
Using barriers when distancing cannot be maintained

- Use transparent barriers when 6 foot distances cannot be maintained
  - Reception areas
  - Temperature screening
  - Customer service counters
  - Production lines
- Barriers should always be used in combination with face coverings
Use face coverings when distancing cannot be maintained

- Face coverings reduce the amount of viral particles from infected people in the work environment
- Face coverings are NOT personal protective equipment
- Should be used at all times in workplace when not eating or in personal (and appropriately distanced) workspace
- Face coverings should meet CDC guidelines
  - Multiple layers of fabric
  - Fit snugly to the face covering the nose and mouth
  - Allow for breathing without restriction
  - Be easily cleaned or laundered
Wash hands often

- Train employees on proper handwashing technique and proper use of hand sanitizer
- Allow employees breaks every 30 minutes to wash their hands
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers at strategic locations (reception desks, entry and exit points)
- Install signage to remind employees to wash their hands
Clean and disinfect often

- Disinfect personal workstation surfaces daily
- Disinfect high-touch community surfaces multiple times per day (doorknobs, handles, elevator buttons, bathrooms, etc.)
- Disinfect tools before sharing or moving to a new work location
- Use an EPA-registered disinfectant for use against COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)
- Follow the directions on the bottle – contact time is important
Communicate across all organizational levels

- Communicate plans and policies multiple times via multiple methods
- Have plans and policies easily available to all employees
- Ensure employees, supervisors, and managers know their roles and expectations
- Have a plan in place for reinforcing compliance with the established policies
- Ensure leaders understand the need for modeling safe behavior and actions
Hope for the best, prepare for the worst

- Think through how you will respond if one or more cases of COVID-19 are identified in the workplace
  - Know how to report a case
  - Know who to contact at your local public health department
  - Contact tracing - understand that you will be required to identify all close contacts (15 minutes or more within 6 feet) of that employee in the 48 hours prior to symptom onset or positive test
- Think through the needs for remote operation should you be required to close your facility again
- Plan for evaluation of your prevention program should a case be identified

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Might anything else help?

- Air flow, filtration, and exchange rate
  - Consider airflow in locating work stations – avoid fans blowing from one person to another
  - Increase outside air intake
  - Upgrade filtration if possible
  - Run ventilation system after hours to provide additional air cleaning
  - Portable air cleaners can provide additional filtration
Colorado Resources

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
• (303) 389-1687

Occupational Safety and Health Administration
• https://www.osha.gov/contactus/bystate/CO/areaoffice
• (303) 844-5285, (303) 843-4500

CSU Health and Safety Consultation Program
• ohss@colostate.edu
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